

"A Wedding You Don't Want to Miss"

Ephesians 5.32 / Revelation 19.6-9, 21.1-5

TERRIBLE CONDITION OF MARRIAGES IN THE FIRST CENTURY

JEWS - a woman was not a person, but a thing // black slaves USA

Rabbi Hillel - taught a man could divorce wife for any reason husband desired, even spoiling his dinner

GREEKS - Demosthenes "we have courtesans for our pleasure, concubines for our daily cohabitation, and wives for the purpose of having children legitimately and of having a faithful guardian for our household affairs"

ROME - had become the "moral sewer of the ancient world"

"women were married to be divorced, and divorced to be married"

Martial - tells of a woman who had ten husbands

Juvenal- woman who had eight husbands in five years - ELIZ TAYLOR

Jerome - wrote of a Roman woman who married her 23rd husband, and she was his 21st wife

TEACHING of PAUL - light years of improvement - NOT SOMETHING NEW

5:31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

PAUL'S IDEAS of MARRIAGE: OLD as GARDEN OF EDEN - Adam & Eve

EVEN OLDER THAN EDEN – ROOTED in the VERY CHARACTER of GOD

GOD'S PLAN FOR MAN WAS MADE BEFORE HE MADE THE WORLD

CREATED TO ILLUSTRATE A SPIRITUAL TRUTH THAT

ALWAYS EXISTED IN THE MIND OF GOD

EX - fact of incarnation / Jesus did not become a man just to become like us
WE WERE MADE LIKE GOD PLANNED HE'D BECOME

MARRIAGE - more than nice social contract, good for kids, order
IT IS ALL THESE AND MORE! •

GOD CREATED MARRIAGE as ILLUSTRATION OF CHRIST and CHURCH

that is why the name of Christ occurs through this passage

Eph 5:22-33

TODAY - CLOSER LOOK - DEEPER / what is behind what Paul wrote

1. Profound Mystery

JOHN CALVIN "Paul refers with wonder to the spiritual union between Christ and the church. For he exclaims that this is a great mystery. By which he implies that no language can do it justice...The great mystery is that Christ breathes into the Church His own life and power"

a. God the Husband ONE not only BIBLICAL IMAGE USED describe

Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker is your husband -- the LORD Almighty is His name

Hosea 2:19 I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion.

FOR JESUS TO BE W/ DISCIPLES the bridegroom was with them Mk 2:19

AS THE HUSBAND HE COVENANTS WITH ISRAEL HIS BRIDE

Jeremiah 31:33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel...I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

b. Believing Bride STRIKING PICTURE- INTENSE INTIMACY, LOVE

Matthew 25:1 "the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

APOSTLE PAUL SAW HIMSELF AS THE MATCHMAKER

2 Corinthians 11:2 I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.

SOMETIMES PEOPLE OF GOD FELT LIKE AN ABANDONED BRIDE

ISAIAH - THREAT OF EXILE & DESTRUCTION - SEEMED DESERTED

Isa 54:1-10 "Sing, O barren woman...The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit-- a wife who married young, only to be rejected," says your God. "For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you," says the LORD your Redeemer. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

PICTURE OF FULFILLED PROMISE IN JOHN'S REVELATION

Revelation 21:9-11 One of the seven angels...said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

MICHAEL WILCOCK "Well would it be for the church in her present unlovely state if she could recapture a sense of awe over her vision of splendor as a spotless dazzling bride. Then a sense of amazement that she, unworthy as she is, should be raised to a place of honor by her Beloved Husband in the wedding feast of heaven. And finally, a sense of determination that so far as in her lies (the ability), she will be worthy."

c. Sacred Bliss ALL THE PASSION & EXCITEMENT OF ROMANCE

GOD USES THIS MOST INTIMATE OF ALL RELATIONSHIPS

AS A FITTING SYMBOL OF HIS GREAT LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE

MT. SINAI: MARRIAGE VOW - WILDERNESS FOR A HONEYMOON

Jeremiah 2:2 "I remember the devotion of your youth, how as a bride you loved me and followed me through the desert"

COVENANT Ceremony // MARRIAGE COMMITMENT - BRIDE EXULTS

Isa 61:10 I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

AND THE FEELING IS MUTUAL WITH GOD THE BRIDEGROOM

Isaiah 62:5 as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

JOHN THE BAPTIZER WAS THE GROOM'S BEST MAN - he said

John 3:29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

APOSTLE JOHN SEES AHEAD TO THE FINAL WEDDING DAY

Revelation 19:6-9 "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. {7} Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. {8} Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) {9} Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

TRUE WORDS / TRUE REALITY / LOVE OF X FOR CHURCH / BASIS OF

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2. Perfect Marriage

a. Origin: Created by God MARRIAGE A DIVINELY INVENTED INSTIT

AFTER STUDYING / NAMING ALL ANIMALS IN GARDEN OF EDEN

Genesis 2:20-25 for Adam no suitable helper was found. {21} So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. {22} Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and she brought her to the man. {23} The man said, (WOW) "This is now bone of my bones and flesh • of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for he was taken out of man." {24} For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. {25} The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

HAVE NO RIGHT to CHANGE TERMS OF MARRIAGE - GOD ORDAINED

LIFE LONG COMMITMENT - BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN

2nd ADAM UNDER SAME ATTACK as 1st ADAM - AUTHORITY of Word

Matthew 19:3-6 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united • to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

JESUS - CAN'T YOU KEEP UP WITH THE TIMES - THIS IS THE 21st Cent.

MODERN PEOPLE - DON'T GIVE THAT Adam & Eve DINOSAUR STUFF

WORD OF GOD GIVES TERMS OF MARRIAGE - OWNERS MANUAL

READ OWNERS MANUAL BETTER - NOT NEED REPAIR MANUAL

WE WANT TO READ THE REPAIR MANUAL NOT OWNERS MANUAL

NO ONE WILL UNDERSTAND THE TRUEST, DEEPEST MEANING OF

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MARRIAGE WHO DOES NOT READ AND OBEY THE BIBLE

REALIZE THE TRUEST MARRIAGE IS BETWEEN X AND THE CHURCH

LOUIS TALBOT - great parallel between X & Church / Husband & Wife

"At the time of creation the side of the man was opened, a rib was removed, and woman was made. In the Gospel of John the side of the Lord was opened and the church was formed. In the Old Testament a deep sleep fell upon Adam when his bride was formed. In the New Testament a deep sleep (death) fell upon Christ and the church was formed. In the Old Testament, the wife was "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." In the New Testament the same picture concerning Christ and the church is seen; we are "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh." In the Old Testament Adam deliberately chose to share in the destiny of Eve which she had brought about by sin; he went into sin where she was. In the New Testament Christ, of His own volition came down where we were and became a sin offering in order that we might be raised. From Adam's side was formed a co-ruler in the garden paradise. When He comes again, we, the Bride of Christ, shall be co-rulers with Him"

b. Purpose: Relationship with God

NO ONE WILL EVER UNDERSTAND THE TRUEST, DEEPEST

MEANING OF MARRIAGE WHO IS NOT A CHRISTIAN

if a husband is to lay his life down like Jesus, He must of •
experienced Jesus having laid down His life for Him

if the wife is to submit like Jesus, she must have the •
Spirit of Him who submitted even to the cross for her

NO ONE WHO IS A CHRISTIAN SHOULD EVER MARRY

A PERSON WHO IS NOT A CHRISTIAN

2 Corinthians 6:14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?

APPLIES TO MANY RELATIONSHIPS - INCLUDING MARRIAGE

2 non-Xtians / 2 Xtians - NOT ONE OF EACH

JOINING OF A MAN AND WOMAN - BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT

UNION OF BODY WITH BODY - symbol of one flesh

WONDERFUL AND VITAL PART OF MARRIAGE / w/out = ANNULMENT

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

UNION OF SOUL WITH SOUL = intellectual & emotional side

NEED TO SHARE - thoughts, ideas, dreams, interests

UNION OF SPIRIT WITH SPIRIT - spirits made alive in X - SPIRIT

MUST BE A UNION AT ALL 3 LEVELS - body, soul, and spirit

c. Goal: Glory of God

NO MARRIAGE WILL EVER REACH HIGHEST JOY UNLESS BOTH MAN & WIFE ARE LIVING FOR THE GLORY AND HONOR OF JESUS CHRIST

1 Cor 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

FORGET PETTY LITTLE PROBLEMS IN SERVICE OF HIGHER CALL

SEE BEYOND THIS LIFE TO THE FULLNESS OF GOD'S GLORY

Revelation 21:1-5 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. {2} I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

GOD'S GREAT WEDDING PLANS PROVIDE FOR US A -

3. Powerful Motivation

a. God's Initiative 1 Jn 4:19 We love because he first loved us

Ezekiel 16: 4} On the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths. {5} No one looked on you with pity...{6} "'Then I passed by and saw you...{7} I made you grow like a plant of the field. You grew up and developed and became the most beautiful of jewels...I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine.

JAMES BOICE "Remember it was not we who sought Him. It was he who sought us and joined us to Himself through spiritual marriage. He courted us. He won our love. Then He brought us to that moment when we stood with Him before the Father and recited those spiritual vows that made us His for eternity. He took the vows first of all: 'I, Jesus, take thee, sinner, to be my wedded wife; • and I do promise and covenant, before God and these witnesses, to be thy loving and faithful Savior and Bridegroom; in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, for this life and for eternity.' And we looked up into His face and said (THE SAME VOWS) after Him (TO HIM)...we took His name and became His. Before we were Miss Sinner. Now we have become Mrs. Christian, for Christian means "Christ-one." Now we must be careful to keep His name unspotted by the world. Have you done that? Or have you dishonored His name by the way you have spent your time, by your questionable associations, by your loose talk or blasphemous language?"

b. God's Forgiveness EZEKIEL - PROPHET OF GOD TO JUDAH

MINISTRY BEGAN WITH THE SUDDEN DEATH OF HIS WIFE

SIGN - Judah would soon lose the delight of her eyes TEMPLE

GOD HIMSELF SUFFERING THE LOSS OF THE DELIGHT OF HIS EYES

Ezek 16:15-17 'But you trusted in your beauty and used your fame to become a prostitute. You lavished your favors on anyone who passed by and your beauty became his...Such things should not happen, nor should they ever occur.

Jeremiah 3:1 you have lived as a prostitute with many lovers-- (20) like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, O house of Israel," declares the LORD. •

STORY OF HOSEA 8th Century BC prophet to Israel / man of God - •
GOD COMMANDED TAKE GOMER / PROSTITUTE

picture of how Israel played harlot for false gods of nations

3 children of the marriage - GIVEN PROPHETIC NAMES

1) Jezreel "scattered" - as God will scatter his people to exile

2) Lo-Ruhamah "not loved / not pitied" - running from God's grace

3) Lo-Ammi "not my people" - Jews will not be the people of God

WIFE GOMER GOES BACK TO PRACTICE HER TRADE oldest profession

JAMES BOICE - considers HOSEA 3 greatest chapter in Bible

Hosea 3.1 The LORD said to me, "Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another and is an adulteress. Love her as the LORD loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the(m)..So I bought her for 15 shekels of silver •

ANCIENT WORLD - slaves stood naked on auction block

GOMER - adulterous wife of Hosea - STOOD IN NAKEDNESS AND SHAME

HOSEA - entered into the SHAME - entered/won BIDDING WAR FOR HER

NOW HE OWNED HER - HIS PROPERTY - HE COULD KILL HER

MANY THOUGHT SHOULD KILL HER - Vindicate Public HUMILIATION

NICE STORY? SOMETHING OF A FAIRY TALE? BIBLICAL FICTION?

NO, HISTORICAL TRUTH! - CAN HAPPEN IN 1995

Romans 5:8 God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

FORGIVING LOVE OF GOD TOWARD US IS OUR MODEL TO FOLLOW

FOR THE REDEMPTION AND RESTORATION OF HUMAN MARRIAGE

THERE IS A BIBLICAL "OUT" FOR DIVORCE SOMETIMES

GOD'S IDEAL IS GRACE - PRACTICAL GRACE, FORGIVES, HEALS, •
& RESTORES - TROUBLES are an OPPORTUNITY TO TRUST HIS GRACE

GEOFFREY BROMILEY "Two partners in marriage have to consider that, in spite of romantic views of one another, both are sinful and therefore their love will also have to be grace on both sides, a love for someone who does not really merit love. Further more, when faults manifest themselves, whether the more sensational faults of sexual infidelity and passionate jealousy or the more humdrum ones of impatience, quarrelsomeness, possessiveness, or irresponsibility, will not human love have to manifest the same qualities of patience and forbearance and persistence and forgiveness which characterize the husband of Israel?"

c. God's Faithfulness

GOD'S COVENANT - LOVE OF EVERLASTING COMMITMENT

Lam 3:22,23 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

WE CALLED TO FAITHFULNESS - DEMANDED OF GOMER BY HOSEA

Hosea 3.3 Then I told her, "You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will live with you."

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS SHOULD BE BASIS OF OUR LOVE FOR SPOUSE

AND OUR LOVE FOR HIM AS OUR BRIDEGROOM

UNFAITHFULNESS = SPIRITUAL ADULTERY- PLAYING HARLOT W/
OTHER gods

HOW FAITHFUL ARE YOU IN WORSHIP - DEVOTIONS - OBEDIENCE?

IF YOU ARE PLAYING HARLOT - REPENT - RETURN - RESTORED

Philippians 1:6 (I am) confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

INVITATION OUT - DO NOT MISS YOUR GREAT WEDDING DAY